

10 Ways to Reduce Waste and Create Savings in the Workplace

1. Post unwanted office items on Minnesota Materials Exchange or consider donating to non-profit organizations or schools. Any items given to non-profit organizations at no cost through the Materials Exchange are tax-deductible.
2. Perform a waste audit to find out what kind of waste your company generates, how current waste management strategies are working, and what materials should be targeted with reduction or recycling strategies.
3. To increase recycling rates, ensure that recycling bins are placed strategically at all desks and next to all trash cans. Monitor recyclable items that employees may be throwing away and assess how those recyclables could be captured (e.g. more signage, education, a memo to employees)
4. Reduce office paper use: use electronic documents and email when possible, print on both sides of paper, reuse blank or one sided paper for jotting notes, update mailing lists to delete duplicate or junk mail, use inter- and intra-office envelopes.
5. Purchase sustainably: buy in bulk, purchase office items that have been refurbished or supplies made from post-consumer materials, choose durable products to cut replacement costs, use refillable toner cartridges.
6. Reuse packaging and corrugated boxes or create packing materials by shredding non-recyclable paper items.
7. Green the break room: use reusable utensils and dishware, set up a compost bin to cut back on food waste, use cloth towels and napkins.
8. Start a Green Team to lead sustainable activities and encourage an eco-conscious culture among employees.
9. Keep employees educated and motivated about your waste prevention and recycling programs through updates, signage, competitions, or incentives.
10. Measure your efforts and report these measurements to employees to boost participation and morale.



If your business would like technical assistance in reducing workplace waste, improving or establishing recycling programs or finding out more about waste reduction, please contact St. Louis County Environmental Services:

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